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New standard for developing textiles with low microfiber discharge

DIN SPEC 19292 *Test method is suitable for materials made of synthetic and natural fibers*

BOENNIGHEIM, Germany (December 16, 2024) – Building on a 2023 rapid test for detection of microfibers in sample water, sporting goods brand Under Armour, testing laboratory Hohenstein and testing device maker PPT Group have published a standardized test method that enables the determination of microfiber release from textiles under simulated washing conditions. With the new DIN SPEC 19292, apparel and textile companies along the value chain can measure and (e.g. comparatively) evaluate the extent of fiber release for different materials as part of their product development.

During the manufacture, use and care of textile products, even from natural materials, fibers are released into the environment. Fibers shed from synthetic materials pollute the oceans as microplastics. Depending on the washing program, i.e. temperature and mechanical load, different quantities of textile fibers flow into in the wastewater.

The DIN SPEC 19292 test procedure uses tabletop equipment and a defined amount of water to simulate a washing process on a fabric sample. The sample water is filtered, and the degree of fiber fragmentation is determined by visual evaluation with a microscope.

“For years, we have been helping textile companies better understand the fiber discharge of their products into the environment - making it objectively measurable and reducing it in a targeted manner,” says CEO Dr Timo Hammer.

Under Armour was looking to develop an easy-to-use, accessible solution for its suppliers that would allow the company and others to avoid microplastics through product development. “In the apparel industry, assessing the fiber abrasion of garments can be a costly and time-consuming process,” explains Kyle Blakely, Senior Vice President of Innovation, Development and Testing at Under Armour. “With Hohenstein's expertise, our team was able to align our innovative new test method to the globally recognized framework of DIN SPEC 19292. This exciting milestone supports our aim to make the test method as accurate and internationally accessible as possible.”

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Hohenstein offers additional testing to determine the extent to which (micro)fibers degrade in the wastewater of production plants or in household laundry and how harmful the fiber residues are to the environment. The tests are carried out according to Hohenstein's in-house methods as well as international standards and procedures.

More details: Hohenstein.US/Microfibers

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The new DIN SPEC 19292:2024-12, developed by Under Armour, Hohenstein and the PPT Group, makes it possible to determine the (micro)fiber discharge of textiles during washing using a standardized test method. A five-stage rating (from '1: very dense amount of fibers' to '5: very small amount of fibers') evaluates the extent to which a textile material releases fiber fragments into wastewater. The rating is based on a visual inspection with a microscope.
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In addition to determining the (micro)fiber discharge, Hohenstein testing can determine how well textile fibers degrade in wastewater and how harmful they are to the environment.
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About Hohenstein
Hohenstein has more than 75 years of experience in testing, certification and applied research. With roots in the textile sector, the Hohenstein testing spectrum now includes both softlines and hardlines. Around the globe, more than 1,000 employees work to improve the human-product-environment interaction with offerings such as testing for harmful substances, performance and fit. They develop science-based methods and standards that consider the user in real life, not just in the lab. Through standard or customized testing, and interpretation of the results, Hohenstein experts solve problems, verify claims and help partners bring better, safer products to market – more sustainably. Hohenstein is a founding member and leading provider of OEKO-TEX® services, and is certified by the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission as a third-party, independent laboratory for CPSIA compliance verification. Hohenstein.US

About Under Armour
Under Armour, Inc., headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland, is a leading inventor, marketer and distributor of branded athletic performance apparel, footwear, and accessories. Designed to empower human performance, Under Armour's innovative products and experiences are engineered to make athletes better. For further information, please visit https://about.underarmour.com.